

Sestre milosrdnice



University Hospital

HISTORICAL REVIEW

Hospital infections have always posed a major healthcare problem. The associated morbidity and mortality cause great problems in patient treatment as well as high costs. In the 1980s, studies conducted in different European countries showed more than 100,000 patients to die from hospital infections in Europe¹. Then a broad drive for prevention of hospital infections was launched, highlighting education along with organized and continuous survey and prevention of these infections. One of the first and most important activities was establishment of special boards at hospitals to work on education of hospital staff that would perform and implement the respective decisions, with the aim to harmonize all the procedures and ensure continuous control of hospital infections.

In line with these activities, Board for the Control and Prevention of Hospital Infections was established at our Hospital thirty years ago, in 1983. Since 1984, the Board has been headed by Marija Vesna Vukadinović, MD, head of the Hospital Department of Microbiology. Dr Vukadinović has considered microbiologist to be the one to play the key role in the process of hospital infection control and prevention, of course, along with other physicians and nurses in particular. As she says in her first paper on the con-

trol and prevention of infections², "... continuous organized and professional surveillance and education are of utmost importance". Therefore, Protocol for the Control and Prevention of Hospital Infections and Guidelines for Correct Use of Antibiotics were prepared soon.

Later, the Board was renamed into Commission for Prevention of Hospital Infections, now being active for 30 years because hospital infections pose a permanent threat. Of course, the problems thus encountered have changed, while the profession and science open new options, but ever new or modified challenges and threats appear almost daily, demanding fast and safe protection. As Florence Nightingale said, alertness is crucial for patient care and protection.

Tanja Sušec

References

1. VEDRIŠ E. Predgovor, II. Simpozij o intrahospitalnim infekcijama i Simpozij bolničkih službi. Zbornik radova. Dubrovnik, March 21-23, 1979 and Maribor, Savez društva medicinskih sestara Jugoslavije, 1979. (in Croatian)
2. VUKADINOVIĆ MV. Zavod za mikrobiologiju, parazitologiju i hospitalne infekcije. In: Klinička bolnica "Dr Mladen Stojanović", Zagreb 1845.-1985. Anali Kliničke bolnice "Dr M. Stojanović". 1985;24 (Special Issue 2):142. (in Croatian)